

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated October 30, 2008. Claims 126 to 130, 132, 134 to 140, 142, 144, 145, and 147 are pending in the application, with Claims 131, 133, 141, 143 and 146 having been cancelled. Claims 126, 136 and 147 are the independent claims. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 146 and 147 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 for being directed to non-statutory subject matter, and in particular for being directed to programs *per se*. Without conceding the correctness of the rejection, Claim 146 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter. With regard to Claim 147, however, the rejection is traversed. Claim 147's computer-readable medium is entirely in line with the language suggested by the MPEP, and it is not seen how Claim 147's computer-readable medium is not a "computer component". See MPEP § 2106.01. Nevertheless, Claim 147 has been amended to even further specify that the program stored on the computer-readable medium is "computer-executable". Withdrawal of the rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 126 to 147 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,335,746 (Enokida) and "Pad: An Alternative Approach to the Computer Interface" (Perlin). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

The present invention generally concerns displaying hierarchically-managed data items. In a background indicating a parent hierarchical level, a first area in which parent data items belonging to the parent hierarchical level are displayed and a second area in which child data items belonging to a child hierarchical level are displayed are set, so that the first and second areas are displayed exclusively and without overlapping each other

in a display area of every hierarchical level. Parent and child data icons are controlled while separated into each of the first and second areas.

According to one aspect of the invention, when a zoom in to a desired level is instructed, the display of icons is controlled so that only data items belonging to the desired level and levels subordinate to the desired level are displayed. According to another aspect, when a zoom out to a desired level is instructed, the display of icons is controlled so that data items belonging to parent level of the desired level are displayed.

For example, in sample aspects of the invention shown by progressing from FIG. 17 to FIGS. 20, 21 and 22, a user progressively zooms in on desired levels, such that only the desired level and subordinate levels are displayed. Conversely, a user can instruct to zoom out, as shown in FIG. 23, such that a parent level is displayed in response to each zoom out.

By virtue of this arrangement, it is ordinarily possible to control the display such that the user's zoom in or zoom out quickly focuses on the desired level and the relevant hierarchical levels.

Referring specifically to claim language, independent Claim 126 is directed to a hierarchical data display method of displaying hierarchically-managed data items. The method includes setting in a background indicating a parent hierarchical level, a first area in which parent data items belonging to the parent hierarchical level are displayed and a second area in which child data items belonging to a child hierarchical level and different from the parent data items are displayed, so that the first and second areas are displayed exclusively and without overlapping each other in a display area of every hierarchical level. The method further includes controlling a display of parent and child data icons

respectively representing the parent and child data items while separating the parent and child data icons into each of the first and second areas. In addition, the method includes zooming in to a desired level, wherein when a zoom in to the desired level is instructed, the display of icons is controlled so that only data items belonging to the desired level and levels subordinate to the desired level are displayed, and zooming out to a desired level, wherein when a zoom out to the desired level is instructed, the display of icons is controlled so that data items belonging to parent level of the desired level are displayed.

Independent Claims 136 and 147 are directed to an apparatus and a computer-readable storage medium, respectively, substantially in accordance with the method of Claim 136.

The applied art is not seen to disclose or suggest the features of the present invention, and in particular is not seen to disclose or suggest at least the features of (i) zooming in to a desired level, wherein when a zoom in to the desired level is instructed, the display of icons is controlled so that only data items belonging to the desired level and levels subordinate to the desired level are displayed, and (ii) zooming out to a desired level, wherein when a zoom out to the desired level is instructed, the display of icons is controlled so that data items belonging to parent level of the desired level are displayed.

In this regard, pages 3 and 4 of the Office Action concede that Perlin does not disclose displaying the first and second areas exclusively and without overlapping each other, or data icons representing data items while separating the parent and child data icons into exclusive areas.

Applicants agree, and submit that in the context of the full claim language, Perlin therefore also cannot disclose or suggest zooming in to a desired level, wherein

when a zoom in to the desired level is instructed, the display of icons is controlled so that only data items belonging to the desired level and levels subordinate to the desired level are displayed, or zooming out to a desired level, wherein when a zoom out to the desired level is instructed, the display of icons is controlled so that data items belonging to parent level of the desired level are displayed.

Nevertheless, page 6 of the Office Action, in its rejection of now-cancelled Claims 133 and 143, asserts that Perlin discloses “semantic zooming and navigating using portals, at the whole article”.

However, Perlin’s semantic zooming is understood to be a gradual zooming of a view to a specific item or spot on an infinite 2-D workspace, rather than zooming based on hierarchical levels. See, e.g., Perlin, Section 1.3 (“Semantic zooming works using the expose event, which says that a particular portion of the Pad Surface will be rendered at a particular magnification”). In other words, Perlin’s zooming simply causes the same item to become smaller or larger to show more or less detail. See, e.g., Perlin, Figures 2 to 4. Even Perlin’s portals are simply different views or “magnifying glasses” to particular views of places in the workspace. See Perlin, Abstract and Section 1.2.

Accordingly, Perlin is not seen to disclose or suggest zooming according to hierarchical levels, much less (i) zooming in to a desired level, wherein when a zoom in to the desired level is instructed, the display of icons is controlled so that only data items belonging to the desired level and levels subordinate to the desired level are displayed, and (ii) zooming out to a desired level, wherein when a zoom out to the desired level is instructed, the display of icons is controlled so that data items belonging to parent level of the desired level are displayed.

Enokida has been reviewed and is not seen to remedy the above-noted deficiencies of Perlin.

Therefore, independent Claims 126, 136 and 147 are believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

The other claims in the application are each dependent from the independent claims and are believed to be allowable over the applied references for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

No other matters being raised, it is believed that the entire application is fully in condition for allowance, and such action is courteously solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

/Michael J. Guzniczak/

Michael Guzniczak
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No.: 59,820

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-3800
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200